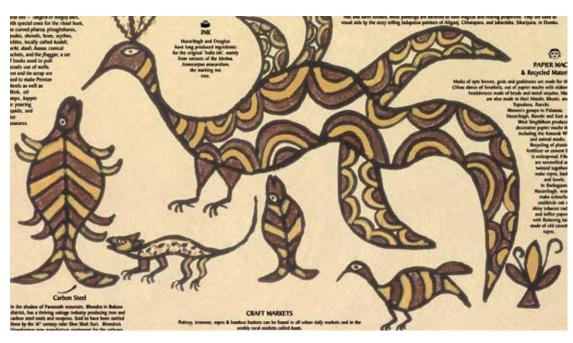
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READING CORNER

HISTORY | LITERATURE | ART | ARCHITECTURE | CULTURE | HERITAGE | BIOGRAPHY | TRAVEL | WILDLIFE | ENVIRONMENT | RELIGION | SELF-HELP | FICTION | TRANSLATION | CINEMA | FOOD | CHILDREN

Can handwoven luxury sustain artisans?



Young designers in India are

fortunate to have access to such

a remarkable variety of diverse

craft skills...which is not possible

anywhere else in the world.

An increasing number of textile and fashion designers today collaborate with artisans, giving the products a contemporary interpretation, a fresh purpose, and visibility. This collaborative immense process is motivated by mutual benefit and has transcended the stage where such initiatives were driven by philanthropy. These commercial initiatives mostly serve a luxury segment, sustaining a relatively small number of artisans. However, such partnerships have generated a new interest and created an aspirational value for handcrafted textiles. Young designers in India are fortunate to have access to such a remarkable variety of diverse craft skills to experiment with and create new fabrics in limited editions each season, which is not possible anywhere else in the world.

It is widely believed that the high-end cury market is the

luxury market is the future for handcrafted textiles. Given the size and the diversity of the artisan community, this intervention is not sufficient to sustain the vast sector. The inherent nature of the fashion

CRAFTING A FUTURE

business is to offer newness every season. This often does not directly help the artisans who invest in producing the new designs hoping to get regular orders, but the association lasts a season or two and the designer moves on to the next cluster of artisans. Handloom weavers are often used to create samples and on receiving a larger order, the production is

transferred to power looms, on the excuse of consistency, quality or time constraints. Artisans need sustained orders for them to gain the confidence to continue this work. The market needs to

expand exponentially to benefit the large numbers involved in this sector.

Japan was once known for its rich craft traditions. Soetsu Yanagi, the father of the Japanese craft movement, laments the loss of folk crafts in Japan. Today, a select few highly skilled artisans practise their various craft traditions, taking them to the level of a refined art form, and making them exorbitantly expensive. He says, 'In the past, craft products were used in our daily lives, and were produced for all segments of society. I look forward to the time when once again beautiful goods are made and used as a matter of course in daily life. This would build a happier society.' He mentions that India should not go the Japanese way, but instead build on the strengths of the sector to offer sustainable and environmentally friendly products to the world, which would benefit

the very large number of artisans in this sector.

Heritage textiles in India continue to be a living tradition that narrates the story of our indigenous design aesthetic and culture. Most places in the world

have lost their traditional hand skills. We are fortunate that in India our vast variety of craft skills have survived. In remote pockets of the country there are artisans who can recreate the exquisite heritage textiles that we admire in museums, and many others continue to produce fabrics for their personal use as well as for a few designers and retailers in urban centres. However, the vast majority of artisans have lost their former patrons and struggle to maintain commercial viability.

Extracted from Crafting a Future: Stories of Indian Textiles and Sustainable Practices

Archana Shah, founder of Bandhej, is both a textile designer and an entrepreneur.



#Sustainaibility



In Conversation with Jigmat Norbu, Founder of Jigmat Couture, the first Ladakhi fashion house.

Reviving the traditional art of Ladakh, Jigmat Couture is a home-grown ethical label that strives to extend their venture into various creative possibilities and helps improve the lives of the artisanal community in Ladakh.



How and when did you come up with the idea of Jigmat Couture? As a designer what Ladakhi value have you imbibed in your design?

An education, experience and interest in fashion led us to discover a way to create extraordinary textiles from the rich culture, art and craft of Ladakh that both I and Jigmat Wangmo, my partner, love tremendously. The art of textile was unexplored and there was a huge potential to create an industry from local resources. Following some years of research, Jigmat Couture was born in 2010, 'the first fashion house from this part of Himalaya'. The land and its culture continue to remain my inspiration. One of our major objectives was to revive, preserve and promote the textile art, craft and culture in the remote mountain town of Ladakh.



What were the greatest limitations you came across in terms of weave, design and innovation in the region of Ladakh?

Initially, we found various challenges like forming a team of skilled weavers, dyers and tailors. One of our bigger challenges was training the locals for fine tailoring and cutting as they were completely new to handling the silhouette, techniques and the machinery. Our second challenge was to promote, introduce and educate the market about the concept of ethical and sustainable couture fashion houses. Our products are made in Ladakh by local artisans at the very source of the wool, far from urban cities; so, it has its own challenges as well as its own beauty. I am sure that similar challenges are faced by young entrepreneurs, who operate from remote areas.



What, according to you, can help uplift the handloom sector in India?

Young and dynamic entrepreneurs are needed in the handloom sector to make the world see the potential in this sector. They are capable of changing the way the world looks at India. When handloom thrives, it not only benefits the fashion industry, but other sectors as well, like textile farmers, weavers, spinners, dyers, retailers and others. However, policy makers also need to look into the core of the nomad industry. If we do not have the resources to raise livestock, naturally the whole system will collapse. In Ladakh, we need major reforms to stop the urban migration of nomadic communities by providing them with basic facilities in their region itself.

Scan for full interview



Far from a dry academic report, this is a story of travels and discoveries.

—Hindustan Times



Crafting a Future: Stories of Indian Textiles and Sustainable Practices observes a strong correlation between the handloom sector and sustainability. Being the founder of a clothing brand, Bandhej, the author Archana Shah shows that artisanal production does not only have heritage value but is also eco friendly. She appeals to the individual, the society and the government to enhance the handloom sector in India before this blooming industry becomes completely decrepit.

For an excerpt from the book, flip to page 1.

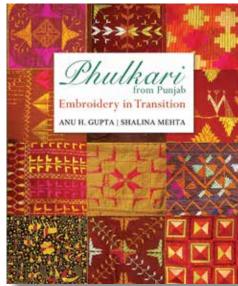


The authors, both Chandigarh-based anthropologists, have produced a richly visual book.

-The Tribune



Phulkari from Punjab: Embroidery in Transition tells the tale of diligence, dedication and desire for accomplishment and elegance that Punjabi women have exhibited for generations. Elegantly embroidered phulkari pieces were an essential part of a woman's trousseau. This book is not a mere chronicle of Phulkari embroidery, but a lived experience of the artisans and their lives that spanned over seven years.



Dr Anu H. Gupta has a masters degree in Clothing and Textiles and PhD in Social Anthropology.



Prof. Shalina Mehta, having taught social and cultural anthropology for 40 years, has been a recipient of several national international honours

Author Maggie

Baxter, while

Unfolding:

Contemporary

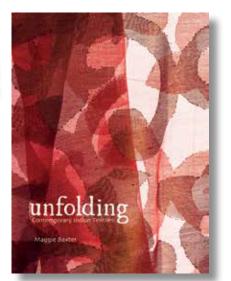
working

Indian Textiles, observed



...written by Maggie Baxter puts the spotlight on innovative designers, who are infusing traditional textiles with contemporary sensibilities.

—Hindustan Times

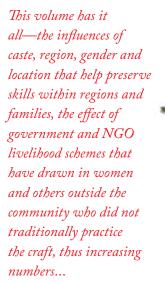


that Indian textile designers are the envy of the rest of the world because they continue to have a close, easy contact with all manner-of-hand productions and crafts rarely available elsewhere. Although it may take time and patience to build up successful working relationships between designers and artisans, the pool of available skilled talent is so wide that it is possible for any dream and idea to

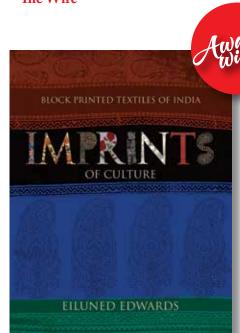


be executed.

Maggie Baxter is an Australian artist, writer, independent curator, and public art coordinator.



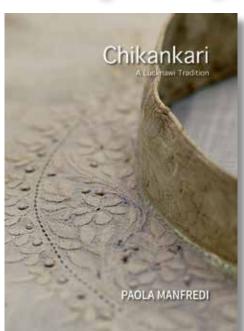
—The Wire



Winner of the R.L. Shep Ethnic Textile Book Award in 2019, Block Printed Textiles of India: Imprints of Culture, goes beyond the well-known haunts of block-printing to explore the less familiar parts of India where block-printing is carried out. At the heart of this book are the personal narratives of the people involved and shows that block printing is part of an ebullient visual and material culture making them uniquely Indian.



Eiluned Edwards is a Reader in Global Cultures of Textiles and Dress at Nottingham Trent University, UK.



Chikankari, one of the finest traditional embroideries of India, is a symbol of Lucknawi culture and elegant courts of the nawabs of Awadh. Its legendary finesse is based on a creative blend of

Beautifully designed and a well-researched in-depth study of Chikankari, anyone seeking to know more about the exquisite traditional embroidery that speaks of royal sophistication and elegance in all its glory would be delighted to chance upon this soulful book. —The Statesman

delicate embroidery with very fine dressmaking and sewing techniques. Chikankari: A *Lucknawi Tradition* is a beautifully illustrated book, showcasing unknown gems from personal and public collections. This book emphasizes on the complexity and ingenuity of the varying techniques, which result in the uniqueness of the craft.



Paola Manfredi lived and worked in India for over 30 years and has been associated with international organizations involved with textiles, crafts development and conservation.

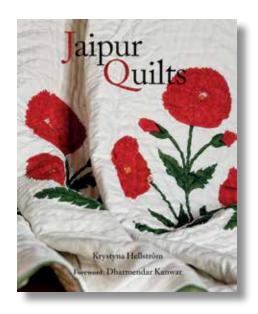
Jaipur quilts are made of a very fine cotton fabric called 'mulmul' and are filled with fluffed-up cotton wool. The first book written on the Jaipuri Rezai, Jaipur Quilts is an illustrated book providing an in-depth look into the wonderfully creative world of the quilt-maker. It touches upon the contributions of the block-printer, the filler to the craftsperson who stitches intricate patterns on these exquisite quilts.

> Krystyna Hellström worked for Emilio Pucci in his fashion house in Florence, one of the best places in the world to learn

about exquisite textiles and original design.

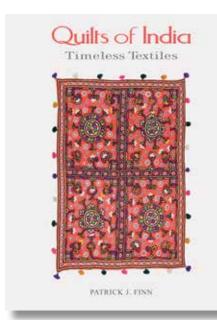
Colourful photographs of artisans pressing down blocks of wood on fabric, detailed traditional designs and anecdotes come together to pronounce the Jaipur Quilt as an integral part of our winter comforts.

-Outlook



Beautifully produced and painstakingly detailed, Quilts of India strikes the balance between being scholarly and accessible; a book to read and to periodically revisit for inspiration.

—Hindustan Times



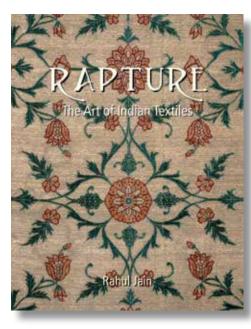
Indian quilters are part of a living tradition that dates back 4,000 years to the Indus Valley Civilization. The language of their quilts articulates the symbols motifs familiar to these quilters and their communities. Exploring the historic and contemporary context of quilt-making, Quilts of India: Timeless Textiles raises from obscurity the remarkable, yet largely overlooked, quilts of India as an important class of Indian textiles.



Patrick J. Finn is an author and an acclaimed photographer.

A historian and textile designer, Jain has left no stone unturned in taking the reader on a visual travelogue that spans 500 years. Even little-known details, once published in journals and textbooks, find a place in the book.

—The Pioneer



Rahul Jain is a renowned textile researcher and historian. In 1993, he set up ASHA, a workshop of traditional Indian drawlooms in Varanasi.

The history of imagemaking in India is now preserved in museums and other art collections the world. In most places, these

around historical pieces are rarely on display for public viewing and there exists no illustrated overview of Indian textile imagery from the centuries preceding the modern era. Rapture: The Art of Indian Textiles attempts to fill that gap by offering a unique survey of the subject to a new generation of textile

enthusiasts.

Varanasi being the oldest city in the world has the best known tradition of weaving. Against this backdrop, the author felt the need to emphasize and acknowledge the beauty of Varanasi's textiles emerging out of age-old traditions and techniques. Combining the past and the present, Woven Textiles of Varanasi makes a powerful case for rediscovering, preserving and patronizing these textile treasures that are inextricably bound to the ancient aura of the city.

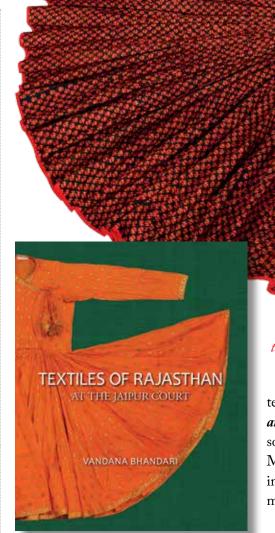
Jaya Jaitly is a social and political activist and a prolific writer on crafts. She is the founder and president of the Dastkari Haat Samiti, and has worked with India's craftspeople for more than three decades in the design and

marketing of crafts and handmade textiles.

The book meanders quite like the Ganga, through multiple realities, history and the influence of Mughal rule. It reframes for us the idea of Varanasi, the oldest living city in the world, through textiles.

—Live Mint





The Jaipur Court has records of ateliers producing different textiles from the 18th century onwards. Dr Vandana Bhandari, a noted expert in the field, focuses on

.intertwines an interesting mix of content that both the academician and leisure reader will find appealing.

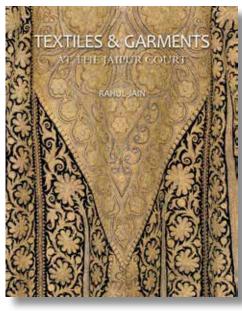
-Marwar Magazine

textiles that were made locally in Textiles of Rajasthan at the Jaipur Court. By showcasing and celebrating some of the best examples from the Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II Museum, the author aims to arouse interest for as well as preserve the legacy of these magnificent textiles.

> Vandana Bhandari has worked as an educator, author and administrator with an active social engagement in the fashion and textile sector. She has held the position of Dean of Academics at the National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT) and is currently a professor there.

...takes the readers into the Kachhwaha In the foreword for the book, treasury, which has objects and textiles Princess Diya Kumari writes, 'The acquired through patronage, as royal gifts Textile Gallery at the Museum has and spoils of war always been one of the most popular attractions among visitors, and the vast stores of royal textiles and

—Live Mint



Textile & Garments at the Jaipur Court intends to bring parts of the museum's collection to wider audiences and to encourage scholarly study of them. It showcases nearly 150 of the most remarkable pieces that date from early 17th century to early 20th century.

garments are the pride and joy of the

museum.' She adds, 'I am delighted

that an international expert of the

stature of Rahul Jain has agreed to

write this book, covering a selection

of the museum's holdings.'

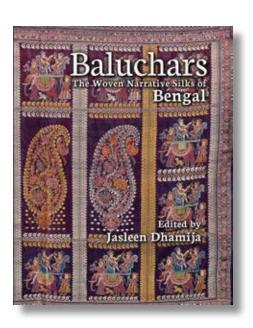
This book painstakingly uses historical data, academic research and personal experiences to give the reader an overall view of this art form.

—Outlook Traveller

The very town which the Baluchar sari bears the name of-Balucharis now gone, but the Baluchar sari is still alive. How this art form travelled from Murshidabad to Bishnupur, then to Benares or Varanasi as well as to museums around the world has been analyzed and documented within the pages of Baluchars: The Woven Narrative Silks of Bengal.



Jasleen Dhamija internationally renowned in the field of world textiles and costumes.



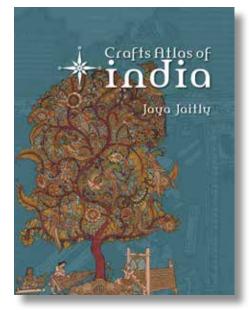
4 | Threading the Needle

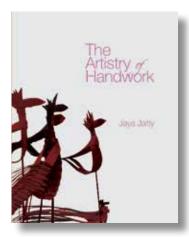
India's capability of producing a vast range of beautiful textiles have always overshadowed those from anywhere else in the world. The Dastkari Haat Samiti, a national association of craftspeople, undertook the enormous task of documenting all the skills and crafts it could find to create artistic crafts maps of every state in India. *Crafts Atlas of India*, therefore, is a rare visual treat that covers the cultural history through handmade textiles and traditional arts.



The glossy coffee-table style book works best as a primer into the world of Indian crafts...

-Outlook





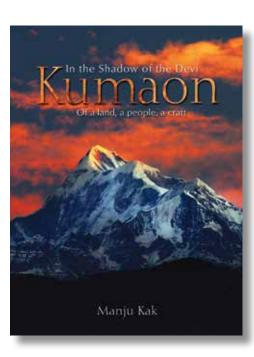
In India, everything is hand wrought, and everything, down to the cheapest toy or earthen vessel, is therefore more or less a work of art.

-C.G.M. Birdwood, The Arts of India

The Artistry of Handwork is dedicated to artisans who worship handiwork both as a creative outlet and means to sustain themselves. This book, authored by Jaya Jaitly, is a collection of images that give the viewer joy at the sight of the simple beauty of hand work.

Dr Manju Kak walks us through the hills of Kumaon and discovers a rich culture that holds many lessons.

—The Pioneer



In the Shadow of the Devi Kumaon: Of a Land, a People, a Craft details the legacy of the enigmatic land of Kumaon through the prism of woodcraft, unique in its aesthetic to this part of India. With photographs from the renowned Kumaoni photographer Anup Sah, the volume is one of its kind and examines in great detail all aspects of life in Kumaon—ethnographic, environmental, historical, craft and architecture.

Manju Kak is a writer, critic, scholar and artist. She has been intensely exploring some unique aspects of Himalayan life through word, image, research or curatorial themes.

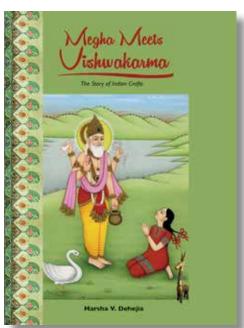
Dedicated to the potters and poets, artists and artisans, shilp is and chitrakars in whose minds there is an ancient memory and in whose hands there is an earthy rhythm who craft beautiful objects. To be in the midst of these is to be assured of archetypal symbols, living myths and timeless metaphors of well-loved designs, evocative colours and cosmic shapes...

Megha Meets Vishwakarma: The Story of Indian Crafts is a story about the interaction between Megha and Vishwakarma as they sojourn through India, discussing the craft and tradition of different artisans. It is an illustrated book in a story-telling form with a unique appeal to the young and old alike.



Harsha V. Dehejia is a practicing, physician and professor of Indian Studies at Carleton University in Ottawa, ON, Canada. A widely respected aesthete and art collector, he has

written extensively on Indian art and culture.





Pattachitra painting on Rath for Devi Subhadra

Focus: Museums



In Conversation with Shubha Sarma, IAS, Commissionercum-Secretary, Handloom, Textiles and Handicrafts Department, Government of Odisha.

A member of the Indian Administrative Service, Shubha Sarma is an alumnus of JNU, New Delhi. She has a number of hobbies that includes yoga practice, travelling, swimming, gardening and writing. Her first book was published in 2013 and the second book, **The Awasthis of Aamnagri**, was published in 2020 by Niyogi Books.

The handloom industry we know is the largest cottage industry in Odisha. Can you please elaborate statistically how much of the population is dependent on this cottage industry?

We have recently conducted some surveys, as a result of which we found that more than 1,24,000 people are actually dependent on the handloom sector for their livelihood, either directly or indirectly. The number of households or families engaged in it is 45,000 or 65,000.



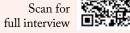
Can you please tell me a little bit about Kala Bhoomi?

The Chief Minister of Odisha, Sri Naveen Patnaik, is a man of immense taste. He is a man who enjoys, and is a patron of art and culture. So, for many years there was an instruction from his office that there should be a museum which would showcase the crafts heritage of Odisha on the lines of the National Crafts Museum. Due to his vision and his belief that something like this should come into existence, the department in which I was posted was working towards the creation of such a museum. Odisha has 50 notified handicrafts in the state and all of them find place in Kala Bhoomi which was inaugurated in 2018.



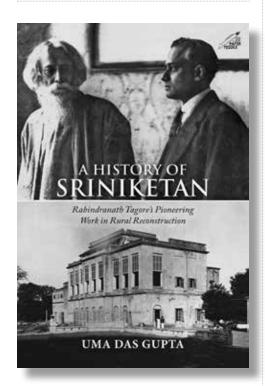
Why is it important for you to have a museum dedicated exclusively to handicraft and handloom in India?

I don't think that's mandatory or in any way imperative, because a rich museum will have its collection but an independent or a focused crafts museum helps those who are looking only for crafts. If I see it from a visitor's point of view, there is a state museum in Odisha which has antique pieces and some of our craft pieces would be there also, but at Kala Bhoomi, if you are more interested in knowing about the crafts of Odisha, then this is a very easy way to learn. It's just easier for you to grasp and it is a big boom for crafts as well. We are not going to talk about antiquities in general; we are going to talk about handicrafts. For us it is not the age of the piece, it is the fineness or the aesthetic quality that matters. For us the age of a piece is not the determining factor like most traditional museums. It might be made only yesterday but if it is very demanding in terms of skill and if it is exquisite, then it is a museum-worthy piece.





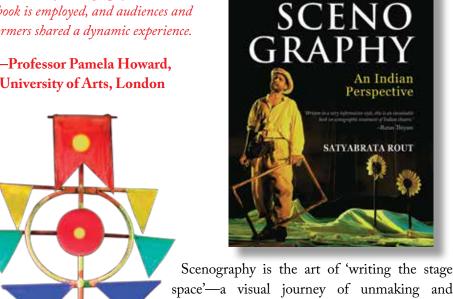
Kala Bhoomi Odisha Crafts Museum, Bhubaneswar Tamil today is a language spoken by more than 80 million people across the world. It is also a classical language since it has a rich literature, which is at least 2,000 years old-much older than most other languages. The credit for the rediscovery of Tamil 'classical' literature goes solely to U. Ve. Sa. Affectionately and reverentially remembered as the 'Grandfather of Tamil', he collated multiple editions of Sangam texts from palm leaf manuscripts, weeded out errors, reorganized them and published those in the form of books in the 19th and 20th centuries. Essays of U Ve Sa: The man who revived Ancient Tamil Literature published under the translation initiative of the Tamil Nadu Textbook and Educational **Services Corporation**, is a selection of 30 essays from the wide spectrum of U. Ve. Sa's work.



A History of Sriniketan: Rabindranath Tagore's Pioneering Work in Rural *Reconstruction* explores Tagore's attempt to inspire the deprived sections of rural society to self-reliance and to make them economically independent—which he called 'the Sriniketan experiment' and later, his 'life's work'—by setting up a centre for rural reconstruction called Sriniketan as a wing of his Visva-Bharati International University at Santiniketan in 1922.

Every element of scenography described in this book is employed, and audiences and performers shared a dynamic experience.

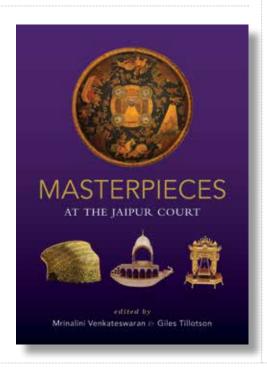
University of Arts, London



space'—a visual journey of unmaking and remaking the text in a theatre space. *Scenography:* An Indian Perspective, is the first book ever on scenography in an Indian context. The book delves deep into the art of theatre making, backstage actions, pre-stage plans and pre-production visuals, and traces the journey of Indian theatre with respect to that of the West. It took the author, Dr Rout, 12 years to pen down this massive work that required thorough research on scenography, performance design and different architectures across various time

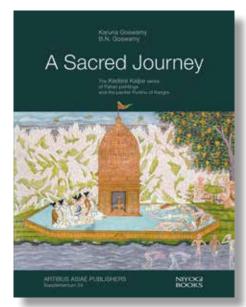
periods. After collecting the reference material, he finally developed more than 100 illustrative drawings for this book.

Masterpieces: At the Jaipur Court is the sixth in a new series of books initiated by Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II Museum, City Palace, Jaipur. Written by leading specialists, they are designed to be accessible and attractive for a new generation of readers and researchers. While the other volumes cover one aspect of the collection, the need was felt for something that would showcase the highlights of the collections as a whole. This selection features some of the most exquisite images, artefacts, paintings, monuments and historical treasures of the Jaipur Court.



Reminiscing over the book, Dr B.N. Goswamy wrote, 'This work, we know, has been far too long in coming, considering that it was promised close to some twenty years or so ago. But this is not the place to go to explanations. One learns on the wisdom that resides in the old French saying: "It is never too late to do something...."

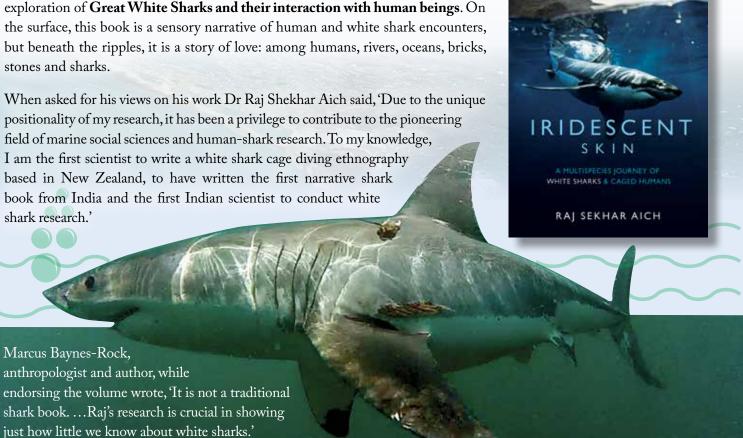
A Sacred Journey: The Kedara Kalpa series of Pahari paintings & the painter Purkhu of Kangra is an in-depth analysis of an exquisite series of 19th-century Pahari paintings that depict the journey of five pilgrims to the land of Lord Shiva. The book features detailed descriptions of the paintings, their subtle nuances and spiritual significance. Includes over 170 magnificent images of the Kedara Kalpa series of paintings from leading museums and collections around the world.



It was only in 1996 that art historian Karuna Goswamy identified, for the first time, the ancient text on which the paintings are based. Her research confirmed that the folios were from 'Kedara Kalpa'. Karuna, along with husband, art historian BN Goswamy, decided to write a book on it...

—The Tribune

Iridescent Skin: A Multispecies Journey of White Sharks and Caged Humans is the first of its kind multispecies sensory ethnography—a sensitive, comprehensive exploration of Great White Sharks and their interaction with human beings. On the surface, this book is a sensory narrative of human and white shark encounters, but beneath the ripples, it is a story of love: among humans, rivers, oceans, bricks, stones and sharks. When asked for his views on his work Dr Raj Shekhar Aich said, 'Due to the unique

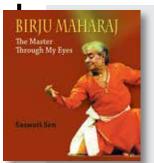


In Remembrance

Major HPS Ahluwalia (d. 14 January 2022) was a member of India's first successful expedition to Everest, and was the recipient of the country's most prestigious awards—the Padma Bhushan, the Padma Shri and the Arjuna Award.

Major Ahluwalia suffered a grievous spinal injury in the Indo-Pak war of 1965. In a man of lesser courage, this could have destroyed his spirit, but in Major Ahluwalia's case, it ignited a deep passion; he not only fought towards his own rehabilitation but also built India's first world-class Spinal Injuries Centre.

We at Niyogi Books are privileged and honoured to have worked very closely with him on a number of projects, resulting in books like *Higher than Everest* and *Tracing Marco Polo's Journey*.



EVEREST

Brij Nath Mohan Mishra or **Pandit Birju Maharaj** (d. 17 January 2022), as he was popularly known, was born in Lucknow Kalka-Bindadin gharana of Kathak. He was a mentor to thousands and inspiration for countless people across the globe.

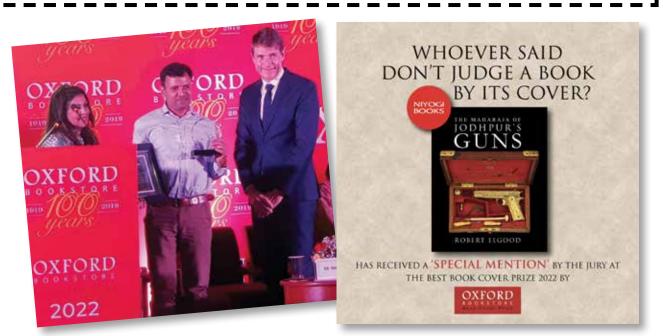
His loss is irreparable. We at Niyogi Books are priviledged to have published his biography, *Birju Maharaj: The Master Through My Eyes*.



Beloved Lata ji with Javed Akhtar and Nasreen Munni Kabir sharing a light moment at the launch of Lata Mangeshkar: In her own voice..., in 2009.

'Queen of Melody', 'Nightingale of India'—many such monikers were attributed to the legendary singer Lata Mangeshkar. She left the world poorer and her fans bereft, as she passed away on 6 February 2022. Niyogi Books is honoured to have published, in her lifetime, an interview-based autobiographical work on Lata Mangeshkar, in conversation with Nasreeen Munni Kabir, titled—Lata Mangeshkar... in her own voice.

In the Introduction, the interviewer aptly observes: 'For countless millions, Lata Mangeshkar continues to embody an emotional experience.... Her songs transcend all barriers of language, region and religion—and her spirituality is present in equal measure whether she is singing a *bhajan* or a *naat*.'



Shashi Bhushan Prasad, Niyogi Books, receiving Oxford Bookstore Book Cover Prize 2022, Special Jury Award from Director, French Institute in India, Mr. Emmanuel Lebrun-Daniens

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- 4. Publisher's name Nationality Address
- 5. Editor's name Nationality Address
- Names and addresses of individuals who own the newspaper and partners or shareholders holding more than one per cent of the total capital
- New Delhi Quarterly
- : Bikash D Niyogi
- Indian
- : D-78, Okhla Industrial Area, Phase I, New Delhi 110 020
- : Bikash D Niyogi : Indian : D-78 Okhla Indus
- D-78, Okhla Industrial Area, Phase I, New Delhi 110 020
- : Trisha De Niyogi
- IndianBlock D, Building No 77,Okhla Industrial Area, Phase I,
- New Delhi 110 020

 Bikash D Niyogi
 D-78, Okhla Industrial Area, Phase I,
- New Delhi 110 020 Email: niyogibooks@gmail.com

Shareholders holding more than one per cent of the total capital of

- the owner company:
- Mrs Tultul D Niyogi
- I, Bikash D Niyogi, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Bikash D Niyogi Signature of publisher

Dt: 30.06.2022